**Major Religions**

* Moved westward from the middle east (Originated)
* **It became one of the largest faiths in the world**, directly leading to civilizations in eastern and western Europe
* Emphasized: **organization and structure of church** (Roman Empire), Missionary activity and worldwide conversion, exclusive nature of truth and intolerance of competing beliefs.
* Host of reform movement and ideas, about the coming of a messiah, savior, who would bring the last Judgment on humankind and life after death.
* **Jesus of Nazareth was believed to be the savior/son of god** and preach disciples, in Christianity. After he was crucified, the disciples expected his imminent return. In the Second coming it became to fan out. (Especially in the Roman Empire)
* Disciples: **One Supreme Being, God,** loving all of humankind. One dedicated to god’s worship lived a virtuous life. World concerns are secondary. Life of poverty is most conductive to holiness
* Fleshly concerned disciples, good work, and belief leads to heaven
* Great reach to the Roman Empire, soon Europe and the Middle East, and then the new world, Persia, Axum, and Ethiopia.
* Early Christianity converters, like Paul said Christianity was a new religion and formal organization similar to provincial government. It lead to New Testament of the Christian Bible
* Periodic persecution, Constantine’s conversion, doctrine
* In Rome, a centralized church organization under the bishop, pope
* Theologians like Augustine incorporated Christianity and classic philosophy to gain respectability in intellectuals
* Accommodated some earlier polytheistic traditions.
* Mystical holy men and women flourished
* In Italy, Benedict further spread Christianity, urging a disciplined life
* Provided social unity and spiritual equality
* Importance of state and political loyalty

**Hinduism**

* Reincarnation
* Spiritually with divine essence and extensive rituals and ceremonies
* Gained popularity after the fall of Gupta empire
* Expanded popular language use and the worship of Devi

**Buddhism**

* **Buddha is the divine savoir**
* Leadership were monks/ holy men
* **spiritual dedication**, concerned with direct spiritual benefits: Arrangement of Buddhist sermon copies as means of obtaining merit
* Bodhisattvas, a doctrine, through mediation people could attain nirvana. (Prospects of salvation) From ethics to more emotional cult stress
* Expanded to China after the Han dynasty fell
* **Spread to East Asia: Japan, Korea, and Vietnam**. They formed a division in Buddhism, Mahayana (Greater Vehicles)
* Sparked new artistic interests (Pagoda)
* Cultural blending of the ideas of women. It provided women with a more meaningful life
* Confucian leaders disliked and attacked Buddhism
* Minority current in China
* **Spread to Southeast Asia**, (in current times most Buddhist live here)
* Today’s world 500 million Buddhist

**Daoism**

* Emphasized obtainable practical benefits, magic
* Clearly developed among peasants
* Improved organization

**Islam (Muslims)**

* Started in the 7th century
* Arose as a world religion
* Christian’s tenacious rival
* Muhammad and the Qur’an